DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 394 721 PS 024 179

AUTHOR	Meezan, William; Shireman, Joan F.
TITLE	Care and Commitment: Foster Parent Adoption Decisions.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-88706-104-4
PUB DATE	85
NOTE	251p.
AVAILABLE FROM	State University of New York Press/Cup Services, P.O. Box 6525, Ithaca, NY 14851 (paperback: ISBN-0-8807-104-4, $21.95; hardcover: ISBN-0-88706-103-6, $64.50, plus $3 shipping).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Adopted Children; *Adoption; *Adoptive Parents; Biological Parents; Child Rearing; Child Welfare; Data Collection; Decision Making; Family (Sociological Unit); Foster Care; *Foster Children; *Foster Family; Intervention; Low Income; Placement; Social Agencies; Social Services; Social Workers
IDENTIFIERS	*Permanency Planning (Foster Care); Placement (Foster Care)

ABSTRACT

Foster homes have traditionally been considered transitional homes, where children receive good care for a limited time period. However, in recent years, many children have been drifting in foster care. Child welfare agencies are using new criteria for evaluating services, including the 1970s permanency planning idea--asserting the importance of finding permanent homes for children. The incorporation of permanency planning has facilitated a recent acceptance of foster parent adoptions. However, not all foster parents want to adopt the children in their care, nor are all foster parent adoptions successful. This book examines the factors that differentiate foster homes in which adoption succeeds from those in which either the opportunity to adopt is declined or the adoption has failed. The culmination of a 2-year study of those people involved in foster parent adoption decisions, this research focused on a sample of 95 children, 43 workers, and 71 families in Chicago. Findings included indications that the timing of the adoption decision is important to the success of adoption, as well as the quality of the child welfare worker's relationship with the child. Other important factors are the continuity of the relationship between worker and family, sharing of information, and early planning. (BGC)

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